DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 442 297 FL 026 311

AUTHOR Nishimura, Kozo
TITLE Effective Ways of Communicative Instruction in the Japanese EFL Classroom: Balancing Fluency and Accuracy.
PUB DATE 2000-03-00
NOTE 40p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative (142)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Audiolingual Methods; *Classroom Techniques; *Communicative Competence (Languages); *English (Second Language); Foreign Countries; *Grammar; High School Students; High Schools; Japanese; Second Language Instruction; Second Language Learning; Secondary Education; *Teaching Methods
IDENTIFIERS Japan

ABSTRACT

The central concern of this paper is to discover the most effective way to maximize Japanese English-as-a-second-Language (ESL) learners' proficiency levels and communicative competence without compromising fluency and accuracy. The paper searches for the best approach for ESL instruction in Japanese high schools. The educational environment in Japanese high schools is examined, and the problems faced by Japanese teachers of English are considered. Next, the sequence of foreign language instruction is explained, emphasizing the focus on form theory because it is the dominant approach to ESL instruction in Japan, followed by a discussion of strategies that can be used by teachers for dealing with the errors made by students in the classroom. Finally, suggestions are made for how Japanese teachers of English can adapt the focus on form theory in the Japanese high school ESL classroom. It is concluded that good judgment by the ESL teacher is crucial to find the proper balance between form- and meaning-focused instruction. Notes, references, and appendices are included. (Contains 29 references.) (KFT)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 442 297

Effective Ways of Communicative Instruction in the Japanese EFL Classroom: Balancing Fluency and Accuracy

Kozo Nishimura

Yokkaichi-Minami Senior High School

Mie Prefecture

March. 2000

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Kozo Nishimura

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Contents

Introduction..... 1

I. Present Situation in Japanese English Education..... 3

II. The Sequence of Second(Foreign) Language Instruction..... 5
A. Two extremes: focus on formS vs. focus on meaning..... 5
B. Current mainstream effort toward effective communicative instruction 7

III. Error Correction in Communicative Language Instruction..... 10
A. Definition of error..... 10
B. Causes of errors..... 10
C. Categorization of errors..... 11
D. How should teachers cope with errors?..... 12
1. Should learner errors be corrected?..... 12
2. When should learner errors be corrected?..... 13
3. Which learner errors should be corrected?..... 14
4. How should learner errors be corrected?..... 14
5. Who should correct learner errors?..... 17

IV. Adapting Focus on Form to the EFL Classroom..... 18
A. A brief summary of the previous parts and some suggestions in adapting to communicative instruction in Japan..... 18
B. Adapting to EFL Japanese classrooms..... 20

Concluding Remarks..... 27

Notes..... 28

References..... 29

Appendix

Introduction

Considering the learners' ultimate goal is to be communicatively competent, without neglecting or compromising both fluency and accuracy, what is the most effective way to maximize learners' proficiency levels in communicative language teaching in Japan? In the literature on second language acquisition, the relative merits of "form-accuracy focused" instruction and "meaning-fluency focused" have been debated over 20 years. The proponents of audio-lingualism, which was prominent in the 1950s and 1960s especially in the United States, argue that grammar is the core of language instruction and immediate error correction is essential. Methodologists such as Krashen and Terrell, on the other hand, insist that explicit grammar instruction and error correction should be regarded as peripheral factors in the total language instruction. They also suggest that second(foreign) language learners develop the structures of the target language and fluency in the same manner and order that young children master their first language(L1). Considering these two theoretical extremes, however, both theories have their own merits and deficiencies. Teachers who place too much emphasis on accuracy and grammar-based instruction sometimes sacrifice the learners' proficiency level for fluency. The time should soon come when the development of learners' communicative competence will stop improving. While, if teachers place a unilateral focus on fluency and meaning-based instruction, then that will reduce the likelihood that learners will attain accuracy in their target language oral production. It is now the crucial issue for teachers to combine these theoretical approaches.

This paper will discuss the most effective ways to answer the initial question. First, I will explain the educational environment in Japanese high schools and some problems Japanese Teachers of English(JTE) have. Next, the sequence of second(foreign) language instruction will be explained, and I will

center my attention on the theory of Focus on Form, which has become the dominant mainstream in communicative language instruction. Then, I will discuss strategies that can be used by teachers when students make errors in the classroom. Finally, I will suggest how JTE can adapt Focus on Form theory in the EFL Japanese high school classroom setting.

I. Present Situation in Japanese English Education

Although the revised Course of Study[1] introduced to Senior High School classrooms in Japan in 1994 requires that JTE should make classes more communicative, they now seem to be, more or less, still facing at least three serious difficulties in realizing this requirement. First, the class size is too large. In view of the fact that the average class size is 40 students, the amount of time of teacher-to-student interaction or mutual interactions among students is inevitably limited. In other words, students are not actually given sufficient opportunities for oral production in their classes. In a small number of high schools, English instruction is practiced in smaller groups by dividing the class. However class size remains a puzzling problem in many Japanese teaching situations. Second, most students are, in general, reluctant to speak out in large classes. This tendency might be due to the characteristic cultural value of maintaining group harmony in Japan or to the fact that students have long been accustomed to teacher-fronted lessons which are still dominant. In any case, this is also a labor intensive problem when teachers try to conduct communication-centered instruction. Third, the problem is perpetuated by the very nature of the entrance exams. Though EFL teaching starts in the first year of junior high school(lower secondary school), the major concern for teachers in English instruction is to reinforce specific vocabulary items, translation skills, and grammar structures which are tested by the majority of university entrance exams.

Given these three circumstances, it is quite natural that JTE should, in most cases, adhere to the Grammar Translation Method.[2] Consequently, not only teachers but also students should pursue and give top priority to grammatically-correct sentences and translation. Furthermore, this difficulty in escaping from the teacher-centered, teacher-fronted lessons leads to

barriers in making classes less communicative. The results of this are that students end up "false beginners, in the sense that, although they have received six years of English instruction at high school and have developed a grounding in grammar, their ability to use this knowledge in communication is very limited" (Ellis, Rosszell, and Takashima 1994).

The central educational agency and institutions as well have become conscious of the drawbacks of the current approach, and quite a few teachers are now struggling to enhance their students' communicative skills. At the high school level, too, new courses(Oral Communication A, B, and C)[3]have been initiated which focus on listening and speaking skills. In spite of this sort of reform being implemented, however, it is still acknowledged that, all over the world, communicative skills in most EFL teaching situation like Japan and other Asian countries lag behind those of other countries. To remedy this problem, in Korea, for example, a TOEFL-type listening section was introduced in the major national entrance examinations, and also the same kind of movement appears to be developing in Japanese test reforms. In the future, oral testing might be imposed on the examinations; therefore, it is essential for JTE to examine to solve this problem to make their students more competitive with those of other countries in terms of their English language communicative skills.

II. The Sequence of Second(Foreign) Language Instruction

In the first part of this section I will discuss the historical context of the shift of the focus from formS to meaning in terms of second language instruction and second language acquistition(SLA). Then, I will discuss the current mainstream instruction dominant in SLA.

A. Two extremes: focus on formS vs. focus on meaning

The debate between "focusing on accuracy and form" and "focusing on fluency and meaning" as a more attractive and effective teaching methodology has a long history in language teaching. The former is based on the synthetic approach. According to the explanation of this approach by Wilkins (1976), "...parts of the language are taught separately and step by step so that acquisition is a process of gradual accumulation of parts until the whole structure of language has been built up....At any one time the learner is being exposed to a deliberately limited sample of language" (as cited by Long, Robinson 1998, p.15). That is to say, language should be taught on the basis of pieces of grammatical parts separately, and the learner's task is to put each part together. Deductive learning, in which learners are taught rules and given specific information about the target language, is important. They then try to apply the rules to oral production. These sort of syllabi are classified as 'Focus on FormS'. Grammar Translation and Audio-lingual Methods are typical examples, and classroom practices such as repetition of models, drills, and transformational exercises are to be emphasized. Language learning is viewed as a process of habit formation, and preventing learners from making errors is important. In addition, language learning is considered to be linear in its development. However, a lot of detailed studies deny the presentation of

discrete grammatical items one at a time. Fotos (1998) states that "...teaching grammatical forms in isolation usually fails to develop the ability of learners to use forms communicatively" (p.302).

The extreme version of the synthetic approach, the analytic approach, focuses on meaning in second language acquisition. "Although the terminology has varied, some have gone so far as to claim that learning an L2 incidentally (i.e., without intention, while doing something else) or implicitly (i.e., without awareness) from exposure to comprehensible target language samples is sufficient for successful second or foreign language acquisition by adolescents and adults" (Long and Robinson, p.18). This approach is based on the way in which almost all children can naturally learn their first language successfully, and the proponents of this theory insist that even adolescents and adults should be able to master their second language if they follow the natural principles of first language learning. Furthermore, an essential point is that all learners, without regard to age, can learn the target language. "...not by treating the languages as an object of study but experiencing them as a medium of communication" (Long and Robinson, p.18). As we can see, a characteristic of the Natural Approach[4] and Immersion education[5] is that emphasis is placed upon meaning and natural communication itself rather than upon grammatical instruction. Teachers are to be tolerant of learners' errors, and error correction is rarely made in the teaching process.

Compared to the synthetic approach, this theory focuses on the idea that meaning will become coherent when learners' improvement in communicative skills is stressed. However, this theory also suffers from a problem. Grammatical competence is limited. Although learners eventually understand the L2 and speak fluently, "...their productive skills remain far from nativelike, particularly with respect to grammatical competence" (Swain, 1991, p.20 in Long and Robinson) even though they have been instructed for a long period of time. For

example, the French speaker learning English often makes syntactic errors such as:

(1) I drink every day coffee.

(2) He opened carefully the door (Long and Robinson, 1998, p.21).

These errors about adverb placement cause no breakdown in communication, and are seldom corrected by almost all native speakers of English. The problem is, however, that the learners are often left unaware of the existence of errors (Long and Robinson, 1998). Purely communicative instruction alone is equally inadequate as long as grammatical instruction is neglected (Fotos, 1998).

B: Current mainstream effort toward effective communicative instruction

Twelve years ago, Michael Long (1988) published a paper entitled 'Focus on form: A design feature in language teaching methodology' at a conference in Italy, and a revised version (1991) also was made public. He suggested that the traditional pedagogy based on synthetic syllabi, where grammar plays an excessively important role in entire lesson content, is out-of-date and teaching grammatical forms in isolation does not lead to successful development in using forms communicatively. Long also suggested that purely analytic syllabi do not lead to a satisfactory level by which learners can accurately use their target language in communication. Long therefore proposed a new syllabus; communicative language instruction itself is important, but grammatical instruction should be implemented in context (Fotos, 1998). Lightbown and Spada (1990) also mention that a higher level of grammatical accuracy in oral production is expected in combination of form-focused and meaning-focused teaching. In other words, the combination of communicative activities with instruction on grammatical forms enables learners to recognize the target structures in context. This new approach, Focus on Form (FonF) originally came

from the idea of the so-called Interaction Hypothesis. Learners' development in communication is to be realized through interaction between learners and other speakers. As Long and Robinson (1998) mention, "Particularly important is the negotiation[6] for meaning that can occur more or less predictably in certain interactions" (p. 22). In addition, some communicative activities are to be conducted through task-based language instruction.[7] The importance of integrating grammatical instruction with communicative language learning is well known. This type of instruction has been broadly conducted, especially in the ESL situation. How has it been conducted? There are two types of instruction.

The first one is based on the fact that "...learners should be able to notice, then process, linguistic structures which have been introduced to them within purely communicative contexts" (Fotos, 1998, p. 302). Learners will attend to the target structures by exposure to numerous examples of communicative input. This is called implicit grammatical instruction. No overt mention will be given to the target grammatical points. The other approach is explicit grammatical instruction in conjunction with communicative activities. Some learners prefer some type of explicit instruction before the activities. Also, it is believed that previous knowledge of the target structures facilitates the learners' awareness of the forms in the subsequent communicative activities. Grammar instruction after the activities is also a well-known methodology. Previous grammar lessons, purely communicative activities, and post-activity grammar lessons are the sequence of the lesson. Some feedback by teachers will be given in the last stage (Fotos, 1998). This type of instruction has its own advantages. Fotos (1998) also reports that:

> After awareness of grammatical structures has been developed by formal instruction or some type of implicit focus-on-form treatment, many learners tend to notice the target structures in subsequent communicative input. Such repeated acts of noticing are suggested to promote the learners' comparison of the correct forms with their own interlanguage forms, triggering the cognitive processes, involved in restructuring the learners' internal linguistic system, and thus facilitating acquisition (p. 303).

Japan has an EFL situation. Most teachers are not native speakers of English. The grammar-based approach is still dominant. Students have few opportunities for communicative use in the classroom, much less outside the classroom. It is nearly impossible to get exposure to communicative input. However, Fotos (1998) suggests that "If focus-on-form approaches are modified to permit formal instruction before the communicative activity and feedback afterwards, they offer considerable promise" (p. 304).

Second language instruction has a sequential development, shifting from one extreme to the other to, finally, FonF approach. If emphasis is to be put on both accuracy and fluency, this sequence seems to have taken a roundabout course. Given these circumstances in Japan, however, it is best to shift the focus from forms to form directly, without making a detour. Also, it is an important issue to find out how grammatical items can be taught in communicative activities. FonF instruction in the Japanese EFL classroom will be discussed in part IV.

III. Error Correction in Communicative Language Instruction

Previously I discussed the idea that learners' development in communication skills are to be expected through interaction and negotiation of meaning by practicing assigned tasks. However, oral production through interaction is normally accompanied by errors. How should teachers deal with the errors the students make in the classroom?

A. Definition of error

In the first place, what are errors? The term 'errors' is used broadly as a general term for wrong productions. James (1998) classified what is produced orally in the wrong way into three categories: 'slip', 'mistake', and 'error'. He defines slips as "...self-correctable without the benefit of feedback from another person" (p.238). However mistakes, in contrast, are defined as "...self-correctable only with the benefit of feedback"(p.238). In addition, James states that "...if self-correction is still impossible despite provision of simple factual feedback without specification of the nature of the deviance", it is defined as an error(p.238). When teachers face these wrong productions, they will be required to classify them and to give students appropriate forms of feedback.

B. Causes of errors

There are many causes of errors in learners' oral production. Negative transfer, also referred to as interference, is one of them. Learners sometimes apply their own native language pattern or rules to their target language. For example, French learners learning English may produce "I am here since Monday"

instead of "I have been here since Monday" (Richards, Platt, J., and Platt, H., 1992). However, the most significant cause is derived from the process of learning the target language. Pica (1994) introduces the following four categories: a) overgeneralization, b) overuse, c) omission, and d) analogy. Overgeneralization, overuse, and analogy occur by "...extending the use of a grammatical rule of linguistic item beyond its accepted uses, generally by making words or structures follow a more regular pattern" (Richards, Platt, J., and Platt, H., 1992). Examples of generalization errors are 'He has two childrens', 'He has one books', and 'I walk with the girls, I follow with the girls'. According to Terrell (1991), learners who have not had any formal instruction in grammar tend to make omissions. On the other hand, learners who have had formal instruction tend to overgeneralize and overuse morphological markers. For example, when learners produce 'He is comes pretty soon', this error comes from the fact that the learner has been exposed to two grammatical structures; 'He is coming' and 'He comes'.

C. Categorization of errors

The distinction between slips, mistakes, and errors described above is one of the examples of how errors are categorized in different ways. Another one is "...the distinction between interlingual error, which results from language transfer, and intralingual error, which results from faulty or partial learning of the target language, rather than language transfer" (Harmmerly, 1991). In addition, the distinction between global and local errors is widely used. This distinction was made by Burt and Kiparsky (1974). It depends on how great an influence is exercised on mutual communication. Harmmerly (1991) also states that "...global errors cause a native speaker to misunderstand or not to understand the message, whereas local errors, given their context, do not

interfere with comprehension of the message" (p. 83).

D. How should teachers cope with errors?

What points should teachers focus attention on when correcting errors? With regard to error correction in oral production, Hendrickson (1978) raised these five questions:

(1) Should learner errors be corrected?
(2) If so, when should learner errors be corrected?
(3) Which learner errors should be corrected?
(4) How should learner errors be corrected?
(5) Who should correct learner errors? (p. 389)

1. SHOULD LEARNER ERRORS BE CORRECTED?

From a historical point of view, learners' errors should be corrected. When the teaching focus was shifted from forms to meaning, there was the consensus that making errors is a natural process in learning a second/foreign language; therefore, teachers should be tolerant of errors. However, subsequently, the focus was again shifted from meaning to form because fluency got in the way of accuracy. If error correction is necessary, should teachers correct everything or correct selectively? The answer to this question is greatly influenced by the following factors: learners' ages, proficiency levels, educational backgrounds, and some instructional variables such as skill, register, and need/use (Celce-Murcia, 1985). Also, the learners' personality is also important. Ke (1992) states that "...in adult second language acquisition, there are strong egos and a high level of affective filter" (p. 15-16). That is to say, negative attitudes such as a lack of self-confidence and anxiety will operate as a filter, keeping learners from being successful in language learning. This also holds true for sensitive learners, where more gentle correction will be required (James, 1998). Ke (1992) also insists that teachers should "...avoid correcting more than the students can handle" (p. 12) although the study shows that almost

all of the learners would like to have their errors corrected in oral porduction (Schulz, 1996). For example, proficient learners will make fewer errors in oral production. Consequently, it does not matter if teachers correct every error. On the other hand, however, learners whose proficiency level is not so advanced tend to make many more errors. If teachers correct all errors, such learners will be at a loss of what to do, and eventually, become confused. The answers to the first question influence the answers to the next two questions. The answers will be also discussed in the following stages.

2. WHEN SHOULD LEARNER ERROR BE CORRECTED?

The answer to this question mainly concerns what an emphasis is in language teaching. When learners implement meaning-focused activities, teachers should not intervene and correct errors. Seedhouse (1997) mentions that "... the teacher notes down errors or deficiencies and uses them as subsequent input for a form-focused activity" (p. 339) while the focus is put on meaning and fluency. Teachers should see to it that learners can keep their conversation going. Teachers can give learners feedback afterwards. In addition, the answer depends on register or style. That is, teachers should keep in mind if the situation in which learners try to speak is formal or informal. When learners are supposed to make a speech in front of an audience in the classroom, for example, errors should be corrected somehow in the previous stage, because accuracy will be required in a formal situation. However, while learners carry on free discussion in pairs or groups, the emphasis will be put on fluency rather than accuracy. There is no room for teachers to intervene. The bottom line is that teachers should set a teaching goal in each activity, and recognize what the emphasis is placed upon.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

3. WHICH LEARNER ERRORS SHOULD BE CORRECTED?

First of all, considering this question in terms of the distinction between slips, mistakes and error, James (1998) concluded as follows:

> If the deviance has the status of a mere slip, nothing more than a raised eyebrow should be necessary to signal its existence to the learners; in the case of a mistake, the teacher has to prompt the learners to alter their hypothesis; in the case of an error, some remediation is necessary in the form of extra or new teaching, to induce the learners to restructure their knowledge of the point in question. (p. 247)

In short, teachers should make sure which errors are likely to interfere with the learners' interactions in terms of the gravity of the error and give feedback in an appropriate way. Second, as Burt (1975) and Ellis (1990) suggest, global errors are to be corrected before local errors. Global errors are the incorrect use of a major element of sentence structure, and they cause problems of comprehension. However, it is not so easy to specify which errors make a sentence or utterance difficult or impossible to understand. Kubota (1991), for example, investigated the relationship between error type and teachers' treatment. He insisted that there be a good balance between the correction of global and local errors when teachers give learners feedback. That is, treatment of local errors are also essential in that "...a local error is a precious point where the reformulation of the interlanguage rule is attempted mostly by teacher's explicit feedback" (1991, p. 20). Finally, it is also important to correct high-frequency errors. Learners can be given a lot of information about a wrongly used utterance, which will lead to a decrease in the number of errors (Kubota, 1991).

4. HOW SHOULD LEARNER ERRORS BE CORRECTED?

This question is what teachers should bear in mind most. Kubota (1991) introduced the viewpoint of the corrective feedback as "...negative input" which means" information provided to the learners that her utterance was in some way

deviant or unacceptable to the native speaker" (p. 2 in Schachter). Each type he explained is as follows:

(1) Explicit corrective feedback

When teachers provide the correct form, learners will be clearly given the information that they were incorrect. This feedback often hinders the flow of conversation. For example:

S: I goed to New York yesterday.

T You went. (Kubota 1991, p. 3)

(2a) Confirmation checks

Teachers confirm learners' utterance by providing a corrective form. Also, this corrective feedback is generally conducted implicitly. For example:

S: I goed to New York yesterday.

T: You went yesterday? (Kubota 1991, p. 3)

S: How do you do on weekends?

T: What do I do on weekends? (James 1998, p. 250)

(2b) Clarification requests

When teachers do not understand learners' utterance, a repetition or a reformulation will be required by saying, for instance, 'Could you say it again?' or 'Excuse me' as in the following example: (T stands for teacher, and S stands for student.)

T1: How often do you wash the dishes?
S1: Fourteen.
T2: Excuse me.
S2: Fourteen.
T3: Fourteen what?
S3: Fourteen for a week.
T4: Fourteen times a week?
S4: Yes (Lightbown and Spada 1999, p. 104).

The teacher gives the clarification request in his second and third utterances(T2 + T3), but the fourth one(T4) is called a recast, which is a

reformulation of all or part of the learners' utterance. Recasts are also generally implicit. Clarification requests and recasts, as well, do not break the main stream of conversation. Their conversation keeps going. As Kubota (1991) also suggests, "...clarification requests have a significant effect on students' modifications of their output" (p.21).

(3) Implicit corrective feedback

Kubota (1991) states that implicit corrective feedback occurs when "...the error of the student's utterance is transformed to its correct form supplied by the teacher" (p.3). This is an example.

S: I goed to New York yesterday.

T: I went there yesterday, too. (Kubota 1991, p.3)

(4) Indication of non-comprehension

When teachers do not understand what learners mean, they say 'What?' or 'Huh?' in response, and ask learners to provide the message again.

Although how teachers give learners feedback is a complicated issue, it is generally suggested that teachers should provide explict corrective feedback when classes are focused on form, and that they should provide feedback implicitly when classes are focused on meaning. The examples described above are all form-focused, but the important point is that corrective feedback should be given as if learners' errors are treated as slips in order to keep the conversation going. In addition, as James (1998) mentions, corrective feedback should be face-saving and should not embarrass the learner. Teachers see to it that learners' affective filter will not rise. Correction should always be non-threatening. One example is that teachers can give feedback to the whole class rather than to individual learners.

5. WHO SHOULD CORRECT LEARNER ERRORS?

According to James (1998), the most non-threatening corrective feedback is "...self-correction or any sort of correction that appears to be self-initiated" (p. 250). When learners produce an incorrect use in oral communication, teachers should try to wait before providing the correct form in some way, or they can merely indicate the fact that some errors were included (Chaudron, 1988). Also, the other members in groups or the partner in pairs can correct oral production. "It is possible, for instance, for the better students to work with the weaker ones in pairs, and for them to suggest improvements and corrections" (Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, Hill, and Pincas, 1978, p. 141). Although there are times when teachers should provide some corrective feedback to individual learners or to the whole class, the efficiency of self-correction and peer correction have been broadly supported.

IV. Adapting focus on form to the EFL classroom

A. A brief summary of the previous parts and some suggestions in adapting to communicative instruction in Japan

Previously, I discussed the present English teaching situation in Japan and the effectiveness of combining form-focused lessons with communicative instruction. I also discussed which points on corrective feedback teachers should pay attention to when they try to make classes more communicative. Given these findings, I will elaborate elements which teachers should take into consideration and give some comments on how JTE can adapt communicative instruction to the present English classes in Japan.

First, considering the traditional pedagogy dominating English language education in Japan, emphasis has been put on understanding grammatical forms, whereby learners have mostly been required to memorize numerous lexical items and acquire the technique of improving reading skills. As a result, learners have not been given enough opportunities to develop their communicative skills. What should teachers do in order to overcome this situation? What can teachers do to improve the learners' communicative skills from the viewpoint of developing accuracy and fluency? As Lightbown and Spada (1990) state, grammatical accuracy in oral production is expected to be higher when form-focused and meaning-focused teaching are combined. If so, grammar-based communicative activities are suitable for Japanese classroom settings. For example, learners can be given FonF-modified formal instruction prior to communicative activities and will be given some feedback afterwards if necessary. In addition, as Fotos (1998) suggests, "...reading-based focus-on-form activities are especially suitable" in Japan "because of the traditional

emphasis on comprehension and translation skills" (p.304). Reading materials enable learners to provide not only some information but also some grammatical items and structures. Teachers can pinpoint the target structure and/or the particular grammatical item during the subsequent communicative activities. In any case, it is especially important for teachers to give learners a variety of different kinds of tasks in which "...the target language is used by the learner for a communicative purpose(goal) in order to achieve an outcome" (Willis, 1996, p.23). Task-based communicative approach is believed to be a more effective way of learning a language because it provides a purpose for the use of the target language.

Second, the large class size (40 students per class on average) is one of the biggest barriers which hinder practicing of the communicative activities. However, teachers should think of ways to overcome this situation. Group work or pair work can be used to compensate for the disadvantage of large class size. Group work has some advantages. First, group work provides learners with more opportunities to speak than teacher-fronted lessons and enables them to develop their ability to use the target language to express their own messages as well as transfer information (Brown, 1994; Pica, 1994; Doughty, 1998). Also, according to Brown (1994), "...if just half of your class time were spent in group work, you could increase individual practice time five-fold over whole-class traditional methodology" (p.173). Second, group work develops learners' motivation and their sense of community since they can cooperate with each other to pursue the given goal. Finally, group work provides learners with responsibility since each learner is given his/her own role to carry out during the given task. These advantages, especially the second and the last ones, will also help to solve the problem that most students are reluctant to speak out in large classes. Although some teachers are afraid of group work, insisting that it is difficult to control the whole class and that learners might use their own

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

first language during the activities, these difficulties can be solved by careful planning and management (Brown, 1994).

Finally, JTE tend to overcorrect learners' errors partly because of the traditional grammar-focused pedagogy. In studies of English as a foreign language classrooms with non-native-speaking teachers, Chaudron (1988) reports that "...the percentage [of errors] ignored was only between 10% and 15%, reflecting presumably a high priority for error correction in such grammar-based instruction" (p.137). Teachers should "...avoid correcting more than the students can handle" (Ke, 1992, p.12), otherwise learners are not able to notice all of the corrections, to say nothing of understanding their errors. Making errors is part of the learning process. If the activity is meaning-focused, teachers should reduce the opportunity for correction to the utmost. Teachers are always required to make an unerring judgment on what sort of activities learners are involved in.

B. Adapting to EFL Japanese classrooms

Taking the previous findings into account, I will illustrate what types of communicative activities are actually suitable for JTE's to use in Japan. Examples described below are all focused on the intermediate to high-intermediate levels of English (2nd or 3rd year students in senior high schools), and the number of students are presumed to be 40.

Example 1: Grammar-based FonF approach (50 minutes)

Objectives of the lesson:

* To practice the usage of dative verbs in communicative activities
* To discover the grammatical rules by negotiating meaning

Skills: Speaking, Listening, Writing, and Thinking

Organization: Class, Groups

Procedure:

Step 1: The class is divided into ten groups of four, and a reporter will be chosen in each group.

Step 2: Each student in each group will be given a different task card and a common task sheet (See Appendix A). The task cards list four grammatical or ungrammatical sentences. The task sheet provides students with some basic grammatical information concerning dative verbs and some metalinguistic terminology (e.g., direct and indirect object) which are to be available in communicating with one another. Individual students will make judgments about the grammatical correctness of their sentences.

Step 3: When each student makes a decision, he/she will read each sentence to the rest of the members in the group, and they will work together to fill in the task sheet #1 (See Appendix A).

Step 4: Some of the reporters who were elected beforehand will convey the results to the rest of the class. Teacher-fronted instruction to check the answers will not be necessary in this stage unless the results are incorrect.

Step 5: After their reporting, students in each group will go on to the next task of discovering three rules concerning the possible order of objects, and write down the answers in the task sheet #2 (See Appendix A) (Fotos and Ellis, 1991).

These task-based activities encourage learners to give oral explanations in order to get the message across. Although these communicative activities are relatively controlled, they can then reach the conclusion by negotiating with one another for agreement. In addition, the discussion made in each group will lead to pursuing accuracy since the reporter will have to convey the results in front of the audience afterwards. While learners are carrying out these tasks,

JTE and an ALT(assistant language teacher)[8]will walk around the classroom and try to monitor the learners' utterances, without giving any explicit corrective feedback. When some particular errors are to be noticed, JTE and/or ALTs should give corrective feedback at the end of the class. Finally, when you introduce a new concept, formal instruction in the target grammar can be given prior to these communicative activities.

Example 2: Grammar-based FonF approach (25-30 minutes)

Objectives of the lesson:

* To practice causative **get** or **have** in communicative activities
* To review regular and irregular past participles and prononciation of ed endings
* To develop oral production skills by non-controlled conversation

Skills: Speaking, Listening, and Thinking

Organization: Class, Pairs

Procedure:

Step 1: Prior to the following activities, teachers give students formal instruction in the particular grammatical item (get + noun/pronoun + past participle). A few examples will be shown on the blackboard such as:

* Steve gets his hair cut every three weeks.
* She got her teeth checked at the dentist.
* New students will get their registration verified soon.

Step 2: Next, teachers write these model conversations on the blackboard. In the model conversations, speaker A is going to complain, and the speaker B will respond to him/her by giving advice. These are examples:

Speaker A: My battery is dead!

Speaker B: You should get it **charged**.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Speaker A: My teeth hurt!

Speaker B: You should get them checked.

Students are divided in pairs, and they will practice the model conversations.

Step 3: Speaker A and B will be given different cards. On each card will be written five sentences which describe some complaints. Speaker A reads the sentences one by one, and his/her partner tries to respond with an appropriate expression, using the target grammar. Some example sentences describing complaints are shown below:

My coat is stained! My hair looks terrible! The TV is broken! My car won't start! This knife is blunt!	All of my shirts are wrinkled! My skirt is too short! The gas tank is empty! Those pants are too long! My glasses are broken!

(Bailey, K. and Savage, L., 1994, p.166)

Step 4: After the previous task, teachers (JTE and/or an ALT) and students have the model conversations, and teachers try to develop the conversations by adding some statements or questions. For example:

S: Those pants are too long!

T: You should get them shortened. By the way, where did you get them?

S: I got it at a department store in Tokyo.

T: Oh, you got them in Tokyo.

The objective of the task is, essentially, to practice the causative verb "get". However, teachers should monitor whether or not the students can use appropriate forms of pronouns and the pronunciation of the ed-endings, too. If students use singular instead of plural pronouns or if -ed is not pronounced properly, teachers should give corrective feedback to the whole class before getting into step 4. In step 4, the main objective is to keep the conversation going. No matter what kind of errors the students make, teachers should give

corrective feedback implicitly so that the flow of conversation will not be hindered.

Example 3: Purely task-based approach (25 minutes)

Objectives of the lesson:

* To develop communication skills through negotiation of meaning

Skills: Speaking and Thinking

Organization: Class, Pairs

Procedure:

Step 1: Each student works with a partner. One student will be given a copy of an original picture, and the other a copy of the same picture with minor alterations. The given task is to describe their pictures with each other and to find out some differences between the two.

Step 2: They compare the pictures and check the answers.

Step 3: Students take notes on the differences, cooperating with their partners. Then, some of the students will report about the differences in front of the class (Klippel, 1984; Willis, 1996).

The most important thing in this task is to negotiate with each other and to arrive at a conclusion. That the students make grammatical errors does not matter while they are implementing the task. Emphasis should be placed upon fluency. Grammatical accuracy will be required in step 3 instead.

Example 4: Reading-based FonF approach (50 minutes)

Objectives of the lesson:

The objective of the lesson is not only to develop reading skills through various tasks but also to enhance their knowledge by summarizing the main ideas of the reading, and to discuss what they read.

Skills: Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Thinking

Organization: Class, Pairs

Procedure:

Step 1: Reading material(See Appendix B) will be given to each student. If the reading material is too long, it will be distributed to the students beforehand so that they can prepare for the lesson. Students skim the whole story and answer the questions on the task sheet #1(See Appendix B).

Step 2: Students peer-check the answers to grasp the gist in the target language. The correct answers will be given by teachers afterwards.

Step 3: Teachers have some students present what they think about the last question on task sheet #1, and students share their ideas with the class.

Step 4: Teachers give each student in pairs the two different task sheets (#2a and #2b) and have them itemize what happened in this story. After they finish writing, teachers have each student retell the part of the story to his/her partner, looking at only the task sheet.

Step 5: This task will be conducted in groups of four. One of the students(student A) in each group plays the role of the main character, Victor Heiser, and the rest of three students journalists. The journalists try to gather some information and write an article about Victor Heiser by interviewing him. It is also interesting that the article is accompanied with his(student A) photo.

Although these tasks seem to be mainly focused on reading, students can obtain a lot of information to talk about from the material. In other words, reading materials help learners make it easier to speak out. In step 2 and step 3, negotiation of meaning will be conducted for agreement. Step 4 is also useful in that students have to speak for a certain amount of time to complete the task. In addition, students will have to attend to a particular grammatical

knowledge (tense, especially in this case) when they retell the story written in a chronological order. When teachers monitor and find that the students frequently make the tense-related errors, they can note them and give students feedback immediately as a follow-up activity.

Grammar and reading-based tasks can be suitable subject matters for learners to seize opportunities to engage in communicative activities. As Fotos and Ellis (1991) state, however, grammar tasks are not suitable for beginners. Grammar is not a appropriate topic for them because of their lack of linguistic skills. On the other hand, grammar instruction is best suited for intermediate or advanced learners because of their motivation for studying grammar as a subject matter.

There is now the general agreement that negotiation of meaning is essential to facilitate communication. For example, interactional modifications such as comprehension checks, clarification requests, and self-repetitions are to be conducted to have a clear understanding. According to Fotos and Ellis (1991), the following four different tasks are advantageous to promoting negotiation of meaning and eventually to facilitating acquisition.

1. Two-way tasks produce more negotiation of meaning than one-way tasks, since the former make the exchange of meaning obligatory, whereas the latter do not.
2. Planned tasks, where learners prepare their speech or think about what they will say beforehand, encourage more negotiation than unplanned tasks.
3. Closed tasks, where there is a difinite solution or ending, produce more negotiation than open tasks, where there is no clear resolution.
4. Convergent tasks, where the participants must agree on a solution, promote more negotiation than divergent tasks, where different views are permitted (p. 610).

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Concluding Remarks

Focus on Form theory, which is broadly maintained in second language instruction, was developed ten years ago as a reaction to the "focus on meaning" theory. It is now agreed that it is not sufficient for learners to acquire accurate communication skills only by 'Input flooding'(exposure to language which learners hear or receive). It is crucial to deal with both fluency and accuracy in second/foreign language instruction and "...to continue working on each, sometimes emphasizing one, the other, or both" (Ebsworth, 1999). In other words, teachers are required to keep an appropriate balance between formal instruction that helps learners acquire grammatical forms and communicative instruction that helps facilitate acquisition (Nunan, 1998). However, it is not so simple to integrate form-focused instruction with meaning-focused. There is a considerable danger that the form-focused approach has a potential for reversion to the traditional teaching of forms in isolation. Appropriate judgment by JTE is indispensable.

In addition, teachers need to use their judgment in dealing with learners' oral errors. They should make a serious effort to do this especially while learners are initially being exposed to meaning focused activities.

Now, Japan has to take a new turn. Japan has been labeled as "...a failed state for its low English proficiency" (Tolbert, 2000, p.A13 & A16), because communicative instruction has been regarded as a second choice to grammar-based traditional approach. It is urgent for Japan to catch up with other countries in oral proficiency level so that it will not fall behind in technology, finance, and information in the Internet age (Tolbert, 2000). However, the prospects for the future are not so bad. Most students do have positive attitudes toward English. The name of the game of English teaching, in the long run, is to give them more opportunities to use it.

Notes

1. The Course of Study is a precept which describes the aim to achieve. According to the overall objectives, teachers are required to have students develop abilities to understand English and express themselves with it; to foster a positive attitude toward communicating with it; and to highten interest in the language and its culture, thereby deepening international understanding.

2. The Grammar Translation Method is the traditional way Latin and Greek were taught in Europe. In the 19th century, it began to be used to teach "modern" languages such as French, German, and English, and it is still used in many othercountries today.

3. These are subjects included in the Course of Study in Japan. When a revised edition is introduced, the denomination will be changed to Oral Communication I and II.

4. This is a term for a number of language-teaching methods which were developed in the 19th century as a reaction to the Grammar Translation Method.

5. Immersion is a form of bilingual education in which children who speak only one language are taught content material using their second language as the medium of instruction. English Immersion Program is now conducted in Kato-Gakuin(Shizuoka Prefecture) in Japan.

6. Negotiation is what speakers do in order to achieve successful communication. For conversation to progress naturally and for speakers to be able to understand each other, it may be necessary for them to indicate that they understand or do not understand, or that they want the conversation to continue, helping each other to express ideas and making corrections when necessary.

7. Task-based language instruction should provide a purpose for a classroom activity which goes beyond the practice of language for its own sake. For example, even if teachers have students write down some sentences describing the picture and repeat these sentences to their partners after students see a picture, this activity ends up being only the practice of language form. Teachers should ask them to write some true things and some false things about the picture from memory, and read them out to see if their partners remember which are true in order that the activity may become more communicative.

8. ALTs are the native speakers of English who are hired as assistant teachers by JET program(the Japan Exchange and Teaching program). They are mainly assigned to junior/senior high schools in Japan, and are required to have team-teaching lessons with JTE.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

References

Bailey, K., & Savage, L. (1994). New ways in teaching speaking. Bloomington: Pantagraph Printing.

Broughton, G., Brumfit, C., Flavellkl, R., Hill, P., & Pincas, A. (1978). Teaching English as a foreign language. London: University of London Institute of Education.

Brown, D. (1994). Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy. New Jersey: Prentice Hall Regents.

Burt, M., & Kiparsky, C. (1974). Global and local mistakes. In J.H. Schumann and N. Stenson. (Eds.). New frontiers in second language learning (pp. 71-80).

Celce-Murcia, M. (1985). Making informed decisions about the role of grammar in language teaching. Foreign Language Annals, 18, 297-301.

Chaudron, C. (1988). Second language classrooms: Research on teaching and learning. Cambridge U.K: Cambridge University Press.

Doughty, C. (1998). Acquiring competence in a second language: Form and function. In H. Byrnes. (Ed.), Learning foreign and second languages. (pp. 128-156). NY: MLA.

Ebsworth, M. (1999). Accuracy vs. fluency: Which comes first in ESL instruction? <http://www.eslmag.com/accuracy vs fluency.html> (1999, September 28).

Ellis, R. (1990). Instructed second language acquisition: Learning in the classroom. Oxford: T.J. Press.

Ellis, R., Rosszell, H., & Takashima, H. (1994). Down the garden path: Another look at negative feedback. JALT JOURNAL, 16, 9-24.

Fotos, S. (1998). Shifting the focus from forms to form in the EFL classroom. ELT JOURNAL 52, 301-307.

Fotos, S., & Ellis, R. (1991). Communicating about grammar: A task-based approach. TESOL QUARTERLY 25, 605-628.

Harmmerly, H. (1991). Fluency and accuracy: Toward balance in language teaching and learning. Clevedon: Multilingual matters Ltd.

Hendrickson, J. (1978). Error corrections in foreign language teaching: Recent research, theory and practice. The Modern Language Journal 62, 387-398.

James, C. (1998). Errors in language learning and use: exploring error analysis. London: Longman.

Ke, C. (1992). Challenges to the proficiency movement: The issue of accuracy. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. Ed 353 816)

Klippel, F. (1984). Keep Talking: Communicative fluency activities for language teaching teaching. Cambridge U.K: Cambridge University Press.

Kubota, M. (1991). Corrective feedback by experienced Japanese EFL teachers. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. Ed 386 022)

Lightbown, P., & Spada, N. (1999). How language are learned. Oxford: Oxford university Press.

Lightbown, P., & Spada, N. (1990). Focus-on-Form and corrective feedback in communicative language teaching: Effects on second language learning. Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 12, 429-448.

Long, M., & Robinson, P. (1998). Focus on form: Theory, research, and practice. In C. Doughty., & J. Williams.(Eds.). Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition (pp.15-41).

Nunan, D. (1998). Teaching grammar in context. ELT JOURNAL, 52, 101-109.

Pica, T. (1994). Questions from the language classroom: Research perspectives. TESOL QUARTERLY, 28, 49-79.

Richards, J., Platt, J., & Platt, H. (1992). Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics. U.K: Longman Group UK Limited.

Schulz, A. (1996). Focus on form in the foreign language classroom: Students' and teachers' views on error correction and the role of grammar. Foreign Language Annals, 29, 343-364.

Seedhouse, P. (1997). Combining form and meaning. ELT JOURNAL, 51, 336-344.

Terrell, T. (1991). The role of grammar instruction in a communicative approach. The Modern Language Journal 75, 52-63.

Tolbert, K. (2000, January 29). English is the talk of Japan: Fears of stagnation spark crusade to teach the language of the Internet. The Washington Post, pp. A13 & A16.

Willis, J. (1996). A framework for task-based learning. U.K: Addison Wesley Longman Limited.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Appendix A

Task Cards and a Task Sheet

Task Cards:

1. I asked my friend a question.
1. She asked a question to me.
2. She reviewed the lesson for me.
2. She reviewed me the lesson.
3. The teacher calculated the answer for the students.

3. The teacher calculated the students the answer.
4. The secretary reported the problem to her boss.
4. The student reported the teacher the matter.
5. I offered her a cup of coffee.
5. I offered a cup of coffee to the president.

6. The teacher pronounced the difficult words for the class.
6. The teacher procounced the class the difficult words.
7. I bought many presents for my family.
7. I bought my family several presents.
8. My grandmother cooked a delicious dinner for us all.

8. She cooked us a wonderful meal.
9. She suggested a plan to me.
9. She suggested me a good shop.
0. The teacher repeated the question for the students.
0. the teacher repeated the students the question.

Task Sheet

TASK SHEET #1 Name:

There are some verbs in English which can accompany two objects: the direct and indirect objects. An indirect objects means the person for whom the action of the verb is performed. However, every verb can NOT accompany two different objects. The following exercise will help you understand some confusing verbs.

DIRECTIONS:

You all have made decisions about which sentences are correct or incorrect. Read your sentences to the rest of the group. DO NOT SHOW YOUR SENTENCES to the other members! Work together as a group and write down your answers below, following the example. SPEAK ONLY IN ENGLISH during this exercise!!

Verbs: Write down possible correct order of direct and indirect object

write(Example): There are two possibilities. This verb can accompany a indirect and a direct objects. Also, this verb can accompany only a direct object and a preposition "to" + noun.

1. ask: _____

2. review: _____

3. calculate: _____

4. report: _____

5. offer: _____

6. pronounce: _____

7. buy: _____

8. cook: _____

9. suggest: _____

0. repeat: _____

TASK SHEET #2 Name:

Search the three rules and classify them according to the usage of different verbs.

Rule 1: _____

Rule 2: _____

Rule 3: _____

Appendix B

Reading script

TEXT BY TERRY KRAUTWURST

National Geographic "WORLD"-June 1998

May 31, 1889. THE RAIN was pounding. Almost eight inches had fallen since the day before, and it was drenching everything. Victor Heiser, 16, sloshed barefoot through knee-deep water to the barn behind his home.

People in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, were used to spring floods. The city sits in a low area surrounded by hills. Two rivers meet in Johnstown to form the Conemaugh River. In spring snowmelt and rain cause the Conemaugh to overflow its banks. Never before, though, had people seen water come so far up on Washington Street.

In the barn, Victor untied his father's two horses to lead them up a hill if the water rose higher. As he turned to leave, Victor heard a fearsome roar and crash. He froze. Looking up through the barn door, he saw his parents in a second-story window of his house. His father motioned frantically for him to climb to the barn's roof.

Victor hurried through a trapdoor onto the red roof and looked for the source of the roar. There, barely two blocks away, was a rumbling, rolling rubbish pile, higher and wider than most buildings. It boiled with dust, boards, rooftops, train cars, and uprooted trees. The mountain of debris was smashing everything in its path. And it was thundering straight toward him, dark and fast.

DESPERATION AT THE DAM

AN HOUR EARLIER and 14 miles up the valley from Johnstown, men had been working furiously in the downpour to keep the South Fork Dam from bursting. Behind the dam was Lake Conemaugh, two miles long, about one mile wide, and usually about 70 feet deep. But the water was rising rapidly, about 6 inches every hour. The dam would not hold much longer.

Years earlier the earthen dam had had outlet pipes near the bottom that would have allowed the men to release water gradually. But the pipes had rusted and been removed. Later the spillway at the top had been screened to keep fish from escaping. Now the screens were clogged with rubbish.

Desperately the men tried to make the dam higher by shoveling dirt on top of it. But the water, rising too fast, began trickling, then pouring, over the top. A ten-foot-wide chunk of earth washed off. Then the dam just fell away. The lake whooshed through the opening. Helpless, the men watched as 20 million tons of water poured into the valley below.

The waters of Lake Connemaugh were headed to Johnstown. By now they formed a wall of water four stories high, roaring down the valley like a tidal wave. Faster the water sped, uprooting trees, tossing boulders, and smashing through towns in the way.

Ahead was East Conemaugh and the railroad yard, where passengers were waiting out the storm inside railcars. In the train engine on the tracks above the yard was engineer John Hess. He heard the flood coming "like a hurricane through wooded country." He tied down his train whistle and steamed backward into town, shrieking a continuous warning. Hess then jumped out and managed to get his family to high ground.

Hearing the train whistle, towns-people and waiting passengers scrambled up the hillsides. Many were swept away by the water. But thanks to Hess's warning, many other people reached safety.

By the time the monster wave reached Johnstown, it had killed at least 350 people. The dirty, raging water was nearly 40 feet high.

SWEPT AWAY

VICTOR HEISER DIDN'T have time to wonder what the terrifying sight hurtling toward him might be. He could see no water in the nightmarish heap crashing down Washington Street, crushing houses like eggshells. In an instant it smashed the Heiser home and sent the barn spinning off its foundation. The barn rolled over and over. Victor fought desperately to hand on. Around him houses tumbled, boards and trees flew, glass shattered, people screamed. It was as though the city of Johnstown had exploded.

The barn crashed into a neighbor's house, and Victor leaped onto its roof. But the roof collapsed. He clawed frantically at another building, then fell into thin air.

Amazingly, he landed back on a chunk of his own family's barn roof. Now he realized that it was water pushing all the wreckage. Lying on his stomach, clinging to the floating piece of roof, Victor rode the deadly current as it swept across Johnstown. Everywhere people were struggling for their lives. Some floated by, holdint onto pieces of debris. Others were caught in the swirling water. Masses of wreckage heaved up out of the muddy water and crashed down. People simply disappeared.

A big freight car, loose from its train, reared up over Victor's head. Just as it dropped toward him, his roof-raft shot through an open space and past a brick house two stories deep in water. Victor jumped onto its roof. He and several other survivors spent the night huddled in the attic. The house was

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

creaking. They could hear other buildings crumbling, sinking into the flood. Would theirs fall, too?

AFTER THE FLOOD

AT DAWN Victor crawled from the house and picked his way across the floating mess to solid ground, safe at last. He walked downstream, searching for his parents. Johnstown was a shambles. Only a few buildings still stood. Almost everything else in the valley had been swept downstream until blocked by the stone railroad bridge below the city. There, the wreckage had piled up in heaps 30 feet high. Hundreds of people were trapped inside.

Horribly, the pile had caught fire the evening before. Rescuers on shore had worked all night to pull people from the flaming debris. Victor joined the rescuers that morning, helping to save some 200 people.

But not everyone could be saved. In all 2,209 people-including Victor's parents-died on that terrible Friday in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Many thousands more were injured and homeless.

As soon as news of the disaster spread, a different kind of flood poured into Johnstown; help. Within two days a steady stream of trains began to arrive, pulling boxcars loaded with food, medicine, clothing, and building materials. Within a few weeks 7,000 workers had come to clean up and rebuild the city. People from across the country and around the world donated more than three million dollars.

Five days after the flood, Clara Barton, founder of the American Red Cross, arrived from Washington, D.C., with 50 doctors and nurses. She set up hospital tents and worked around the clock for four months, caring for the sick, injured, and homeless. She also supervised the construction of temporary housing for the homeless. When she left, Johnstown's grateful citizens gave her a diamond locket.

REVIVAL

THE JOHNSTOWN DISASTER had been a worldwide sensation. It was the biggest news story since Abraham Lincoln's assassination 24 years before. For weeks newspapers carrying stories of the flood sold out almost instantly. Dozens of books, songs, and poems dramatizing the flood were published.

By fall Johnstown was bouncing back. Merchants did business again in the town square. Men returned to their jobs at the iron works. New houses and stores began to spring up. Children went back to school.

The city of Johnstown had a future again. Once shouted in panic, the

expression "Run for the hills!" was about to become part of the American vocabulary.

His family gone, Victor Heiser left Johnstown soon after the flood. He never forgot the suffering he saw that awful day. He became a medical doctor, dedicating his life to stopping the spread of deadly diseases. In his career he traveled the world 16 times and helped save the lives of millions of people.

TASK SHEET #1: Answer these questions

1. Where was Victor Heiser when the rain began pounding?
2. Where were Victor Heiser's parents?
3. Where did Victor Heiser go to look for the source of the roar?
4. What were men doing at the South Fork Dam an hour before the tragedy?
5. Who is John Hess?
6. What did Victor Heiser do on Saturday morning?
7. Were Victor Heiser's parents able to escape from the flood?
8. Who/What is Clara Barton?
9. How long did it take Johnstown to bounce back?
0. What part of the story greatly touched you, and why?

Space for the answers will be omitted

TASK SHEET #2a: Read the story and fill in the boxes below

MAY 31, 1889: Weather

Victor Heiser: Age:

Where:

See:

Hear:

What happened?

TASK SHEET #2b: Read the story and fill in the boxes below

AFTER THE FLOOD

Situation of the city	What did Victor do?

How many people died?

How many people were injured?

What happened to Victor's parents?